

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

*Service Score Results:* Baseline

**Name of Program and Service:** Residential Services Unit at Bucks County Youth Center Girls Circle Support Group-Group Counseling

Cohort Total: 12

SPEP ID: 90

Selected Timeframe: 2/1/2014 – 7/20/2015

Date(s) of Interview(s): 7/31/2015

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Bucks County, William Batty & Heather Perry

Person Preparing Report: William Batty & Heather Perry

**Description of Service:** *This should include a **brief** overview of the service within the context of the program, the location and if community based or residential. Indicate the type of youth referred, how the service is delivered, the purpose of service and any other **relevant** information to help the reader understand the SPEP service type classification. (350 character limit)*

In addition to a detention center, The Bucks County Youth Center (BCYC) operates a 20 bed licensed non-secure, community based Residential Service Unit (RSU) for males and females. This program has evolved to serve a target population as follows: 1. Males and females who are 13 to 17 years old and referred by the Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department, 2. Juveniles who have not committed an arson or sex specific offense, and 3. Juveniles who do not have an acute mental health issue. The RSU houses its participants in wings at BCYC. Males and females have separate wings but the programs have more similarities than differences. The services that are different are identified as “Boys Council” for males and “Girls Circle” for females. Other than these two differences the services are the same for both genders. There are not any substantial differences between the male and female units as to how services are delivered, how staff are trained or how staff are supervised. But, services are delivered by two different entities. Services are delivered by RSU staff and Lenape Valley Foundation (LVF) staff. LVF works collaboratively with BCYC to provide assessment and treatment for the residents in the RSU. LVF also strives to offer “Comprehensive outpatient mental health services are available to clients from a wide variety of age and diagnostic groups including: children, adolescents, adults, and older adults. The services at this proposed satellite site will be targeted toward at-risk youth who are identified by facility staff, parents/guardians and the court system as demonstrating a need for mental health assessment and services. The services will include: 1. Assessment 2. Individual Therapy 3. Group Therapy 4. Family Therapy If necessary, youth will receive psychiatric services (i.e. psychiatric evaluations and medication monitoring) by a Lenape Valley Foundation psychiatrist or CRNP. Psychiatric oversight and supervision will be provided by the on-site psychiatrist or through Lenape Valley Foundation’s main site located in Doylestown.” The Girls Circle Support Group services delivered by LVF are the focus of this report.

**The four characteristics of a service found to be the most strongly related to reducing recidivism:**

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Group Counseling

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? No

If so, what is the Service type? There is no qualifying supplemental service

Was the supplemental service provided? n/a      Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 30

Total Points Earned: 30      Total Points Possible: 35

2. **Quality of Service:** Research has shown that programs that deliver service with high quality are more likely to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. Monitoring of quality is defined by existence of written protocol, staff training and supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Earned: 20      Total Points Possible: 20

3. **Amount of Service:** Score was derived from examination of weeks and hours each youth in the cohort received the service. The amount of service is measured by the target amounts of service for the SPEP service categorization. Each SPEP service type has varying amounts of duration and dosage. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 4

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Earned: 4 Total Points Possible: 20

4. **Youth Risk Level:** The risk level score is compiled by calculating the total % of youth that score above low risk, and the total % of youth who score above moderate risk to reoffend based on the results of the YLS.

12 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 12 points

1 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 0 points

Total Points Earned: 12 Total Points Possible: 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 66 total points awarded out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP therapeutic service. (eg: individual counseling compared to cognitive behavioral therapy, social skills training, mentoring, etc.)

*Note: Services with scores greater than or equal to 50 show the service is having a positive impact on recidivism reduction.*

**Program Optimization Percentage:** 69% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (eg: individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research)

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## The SPEP and Performance Improvement

The intended use of the SPEP is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Recommendations for performance improvement are included in the service feedback report, and these recommendations are the focus of the performance improvement plan, a shared responsibility of the service provider and the local juvenile court. The recommendations for this service included in the feedback report are:

The program could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction through:

1. Enhancing duration and dosage

- Collaborate with the probation department to meet the target duration of 24 weeks for the group counseling service type
- Collaborate with the probation department to meet the target dosage of 40 hours for the group counseling service type.- Investigate options that may permit those who complete the program to meet the target duration of 24 weeks and target dosage of 40 hours

2. Enhancing written protocol/Treatment Plan

- Utilize language contained in the Youth Level Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS) to identify a target population
- Display evidence/documentation that the manual is being used referenced during service delivery and the manual is updated to ensure effective service delivery.

3. Enhancing staff training

- Collaborate with probation department to train staff in YLS
- Track and document all trainings attended by those who deliver the service
- Offer service delivery specific training LVF therapist who deliver the service

4. Enhancing staff supervision

- Add service delivery specific language to forms utilized to provide feedback to those who deliver the service
- Add service delivery specific language to policies/procedures that address drift

# The Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™):

*Service Score Results:* Reassessment

**Name of Program and Service:** Bucks County Youth Center (BCYC)-Residential Services Unit-Girls Circle®

Cohort Total: 12

SPEP ID: 90-T02

Timeframe of Selected Cohort: Feb.13, 2017 – Jan.15, 2019

Date(s) of Interview(s): Mar. 21, 2019

Lead County & SPEP Team Representatives: Nick Caramenico, Bucks Co., Kevin Perluke, EPISCenter

Person Preparing Report: Nick Caramenico & Kevin Perluke

**Description of Service:** *This should include a **brief** overview of the service within the context of the program, the location and if community based or residential. Indicate the type of youth referred, how the service is delivered, the purpose of service and any other **relevant** information to help the reader understand the SPEP service type classification. (500 word limit)*

The Residential Services Unit (RSU) is a 20 bed, non-secure, community based residential program for males and females licensed by the Department of Public Welfare and operated by the Bucks County Youth Center (BCYC). Males and females are housed in separate wings and participate in similar therapeutic services. Male programming (Boys RSU) began in May 1998 and all males participate in, "Boys Council". The female programming (Girls RSU) began in May 2011 and all girls participate in, "Girls Circle®". Staff operate in both units and are trained, supervised and facilitate services in the same manner. Services are delivered by both RSU and Lenape Valley Foundation (LVF) staff. RSU staff are employees for the County of Bucks, LVF staff are not employees for the County of Bucks but work collaboratively with BCYC to provide assessment and treatment for the residents in the RSU. Since inception, the RSU has evolved to serve a target population as follows: 1. Males and females who are 13 to 17 years old and referred by the Bucks County Juvenile Probation Department. 2. Juveniles who have not committed an arson or sex specific offense. 3. Juveniles who do not have an acute mental health issue. LVF is a Bucks County Department of Mental Health/Developmental Programs Base Service Unit. LVF was approved for a satellite office at BCYC by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in March 2013. LVF is licensed by the state to provide outpatient services to youth in the RSU who are referred by staff at the RSU and court personnel. The estimated number of students per week is 15 to 20. The weekly estimate of sessions is: 20 individual sessions, 10 family sessions and 5 group therapy sessions for 1.5 hours each. The RSU runs one Girls Circle® Support Group. Girls Circle® was described as a structured peer relational process support group for all female residents at the RSU. The group occurs weekly for 1.5 hours per session. The group is an open format that permits residents to join the group as they enter the RSU and leave it when they graduate from the RSU. Each group is led by the same LVF therapist who has a master's degree and is license eligible. The LVF therapist attended a two-day training in the Girls Circle® Curriculum in 2010. The group is manual guided. The manual's Table of Contents include: 1. Philosophy/Rationale of Girls Circle®, 2. The Girls Circle® Model, 3. Primary Role of the Facilitator, 4. Principles of Communication, 5. Methods of Effective Group Dynamics, 6. Effective Facilitator Skills, and 7. How to Shape Lively Group Discussion. Girls Circle® Activity Guides: 1. Friendship, 2. Being A Girl, 3. Body Image, 4. Honoring Our Diversity, 5. Mind, Body, Spirit, 6. Expressing My Individuality, 7. Relationships With Peers, 8. Who I AM, 9. Paths To The Future, 10. Wise & Well, and 11. My Family, My Self. Each topic/unit is about 10-12 weeks in duration.

**The four characteristics of a service found to be the most strongly related to reducing recidivism:**

1. **SPEP™ Service Type:** Group Counseling

Based on the meta-analysis, is there a qualifying supplemental service? No

If so, what is the Service type? There is no qualifying supplemental service

Was the supplemental service provided? n/a      Total Points Possible for this Service Type: 30

Total Points Earned: 30      Total Points Possible: 35

2. **Quality of Service:** Research has shown that programs that deliver service with high quality are more likely to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. Monitoring of quality is defined by existence of written protocol, staff training and supervision, and how drift from service delivery is addressed.

Total Points Earned: 20      Total Points Possible: 20

3. **Amount of Service:** Score was derived from examination of weeks and hours each youth in the cohort received the service. The amount of service is measured by the target amounts of service for the SPEP service categorization. Each SPEP service type has varying amounts of duration and dosage. Youth should receive the targeted amounts to have the greatest impact on recidivism reduction.

Points received for Duration or Number of Weeks: 6

Points received for Dosage or Number of Hours: 0

Total Points Earned: 6 Total Points Possible: 20

4. **Youth Risk Level:** The risk level score is compiled by calculating the total % of youth that score above low risk, and the total % of youth who score above moderate risk to reoffend based on the results of the YLS.

11 youth in the cohort are Moderate, High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 10 points

5 youth in the cohort are High or Very High YLS Risk Level for a total of 13 points

Total Points Earned: 23 Total Points Possible: 25

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**Basic SPEP™ Score:** 79 total points awarded out of 100 points. Compares service to any other type of SPEP therapeutic service. (eg: individual counseling compared to cognitive behavioral therapy, social skills training, mentoring, etc.)

*Note: Services with scores greater than or equal to 50 show the service is having a positive impact on recidivism reduction.*

**Program Optimization Percentage:** 83% This percentage compares the service to the same service types found in the research. (eg: individual counseling compared to all other individual counseling services included in the research)

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## The SPEP and [Performance Improvement](#)

The intended use of the SPEP is to optimize the effectiveness of reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders. Recommendations for performance improvement are included in the service feedback report, and these recommendations are the focus of the performance improvement plan, a shared responsibility of the service provider and the local juvenile court. The recommendations for this service included in the feedback report are:

Girls Circle® scored a 79 for the Basic Score and an 83% Program Optimization Percentage. The Basic Score represents an increase of 13 points from the initial SPEP™ assessment. The POP Score represents an increase of 14 percentage points from the initial SPEP™ assessment. The service is classified as a Group 4 service type. There is no qualifying supplemental service. The quality of service delivery was found to be at a High Level. For Amount of Service, 67% of the youth received the recommended targeted weeks of duration, and 0% of the youth received the recommended targeted contact hours for this service type. The Risk Levels of youth admitted to the program were: 8% Low Risk, 50% Moderate Risk, 42% High Risk, and 0% Very High Risk. The program could improve its capacity for recidivism reduction by addressing the following recommendations:

1. Regarding Quality of Service Delivery:

a. Written Protocol:

- i. Document the latest version date to ensure it is being utilized during service delivery.

b. Staff Training:

- i. Continue to collaborate with Juvenile Probation for JJSES Trainings.

c. Staff Supervision:

- i. Ensure supervisors monitor the delivery of this service utilizing the Girls Circle® Checklist.  
ii. Develop a schedule for supervisors to monitor service delivery.  
iii. Ensure supervisors utilize the Girls Circle® Checklist to provide feedback to staff who deliver the service.  
iv. Incorporate service delivery into staff performance evaluations.

d. Organizational Response to Drift:

- i. Continue to complete the Service Provider Outcome Forms.  
ii. Review pre-test and post-test results to improve service delivery.

2. Regarding Amount of Service:

- a. Collaborate with JPO from Bucks County to better match research recommendations for the targeted amount of service for each youth.